

these goals, but before Congress adjourns this year we need to go ahead and call on the House to pass the legislation we have passed in the Senate. This is an important step and one that should not be delayed until the convening of a new Congress. I hope the House of Representatives will bring this legislation up quickly, will pass it, will send it to the President, and we can begin down the road of dealing with this serious problem that afflicts so many of our children.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. How much time is remaining?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. There are 9 minutes 22 seconds remaining.

PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the debate last week between Senator KERRY and President Bush marked a milestone in this campaign. Some 65 million Americans tuned in to this debate, which is an extraordinary number, more than tune in to such popular television shows as the Oscars. Certainly, we believe that Presidential debates serve that audience even more.

It was an important debate because it signaled the beginning of the real campaign. Despite all the time, effort, and money, it appears that a large group of American voters are waiting to these closing weeks, listening closely to the candidates, to make the decision about how they will vote on November 2, one of the most historic elections we have witnessed in recent times.

The debate come Friday night is going to be equally, if not more, important. We will move from the critical issue of national security and foreign policy to issues of great importance related to the domestic situation in America: How are things going for America's individuals and families and businesses?

We believe, as we look at the record, that the choice is going to be very clear. We will use the same matrix, the same measure President Ronald Reagan used when he ran for President, when he asked very bluntly: Are you better off today than you were 4 years ago?

When it comes to the domestic issues, we believe there is a compelling case and a compelling argument that America is not better off today than it was 4 years ago when President George W. Bush was sworn in. The numbers speak for themselves. This President will have lost more jobs as President than any President in the history of

the United States since Herbert Hoover.

I have to explain for those not old enough that Herbert Hoover's Presidency was a disaster. It was the Great Depression. America saw more suffering from families and businesses in that period of time than at any time in that whole era, and now we have a President who came to office, George Bush, saying, give me a chance with my economic policy, and by every objective standard the President's economic policies have failed. They have failed to create jobs. We have seen an exodus of good-paying jobs. In my State, 160,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost. Some have been replaced, but virtually every single replacement job pays less, offers fewer, if any, benefits, and families find themselves falling behind.

Look at the national numbers. Consider what has happened. We have seen median household income across America decline by 3.4 percent under President Bush. That means the earning power of American families has gone down under Bush's economic policies while the costs of living have gone up. Gasoline prices are up 22 percent over when the President was elected, college tuition at public 4-year institutions up 28 percent, and family health care premiums up 45 percent. This is a back-breaking statistic because individual families cannot afford to go without health care insurance protection, and yet the cost goes up every year. It becomes increasingly expensive and less coverage is offered.

What has the Bush administration done to help working families deal with these increased costs of living? Virtually nothing. They have offered tax cuts for the wealthiest people in America, with the blind faith that if the richest people in America are given more money, somehow working Americans and middle-income Americans will prosper. It has failed. It has not worked. The debate on Friday night will focus on that.

President Bush will be held accountable not just for the situation in Iraq and the standing of the United States in the world but in terms of what he has done or failed to do for families. Listen to what has happened since President Bush has taken office: 1.6 million private sector jobs have been lost; 5.2 million more Americans have no health insurance. Since President Bush has been President, 5 million Americans have lost their health insurance, and 4.3 million Americans have descended into poverty. They were above the poverty line when President Bush came in. His economic policies have driven them below.

Household debt has risen \$2.3 billion as families borrow more money to try to keep up with the costs. Personal bankruptcies have hit a record high. The S&P 500 has dropped 15 percent, decimating retirement savings of families across the board. The No Child Left Behind Program has not been funded,

shortchanged by billions of dollars. There has been \$500 billion taken out of the Social Security trust fund, and keep this in mind: When President Bush took office, we had a \$236 billion surplus. Today, we have a \$422 billion deficit. In fact, some argue, including my colleague from Illinois, that it is almost \$700 billion when the Social Security trust fund that has been raided is added in.

This President, a so-called fiscal conservative, has driven us more deeply in debt than any President in our history, has lost more jobs than any President in 70 years. How will he answer the most basic question: Is America better off today than it was 4 years ago? By every objective measurable standard, when it comes to the comfort and hope of American families, the Bush administration has failed time and time again. They have a foreign policy which has put us in a situation in Iraq with no end in sight. They have an economic policy giving tax cuts to wealthy people, which has no sensitivity to the struggles working families are facing.

So how are the constituents of President Bush doing, what he calls his base, the wealthiest people in America? Pretty well. HMO profits are up 84 percent, CEO compensation up 20 percent, corporate profits up 15.3 percent. They are doing great on Wall Street but not too great on Main Street, and that is what the issue is going to be in St. Louis at Washington University on Friday night when Senator KERRY faces President Bush in a townhall meeting, where families from across the Midwest can ask the questions on their mind. These are the questions they will ask because they reflect the reality of family life in America.

The President promised us compassionate conservatism. He has failed when it comes to conservatism, as we have record historic deficits. He has certainly failed when it comes to compassion, as he has not addressed the most basic issues: making certain families have good jobs, that they have health insurance to cover them in times of need, that they can afford the college tuition so their kids can have a better life than they have had. These are the issues we are going to face.

What will we do in the Senate after we have considered this important bill on intelligence? We will go to a tax bill which is now in conference, which is larded up with some of the worst special interest favors we have seen in the history of this Senate. That is the best this Republican-led Senate can do, is come up with that kind of a bill at the end to give away literally tens of billions of dollars in a deficit economy to special interest groups again in Washington.

What will we do in this tax bill to help working families and small businesses pay for health insurance? Absolutely nothing. What will we do to stop good-paying jobs, manufacturing jobs, from being outsourced to other countries? Scarcely anything. Very little. It

shows where the Republican priorities are on Capitol Hill and where the Republican priorities are in the White House, and it shows the clear choice that American voters are going to face on November 2.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). The majority leader.

CLOTURE VOTE

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, in a very few minutes we come to a very important vote before this body, a vote that in many ways brings to a head the debate that has been on the floor the last week and a half to the last almost 2 weeks, a debate that focuses on the safety and security of the American people. This is a debate that does encompass a major reorganization to make our intelligence activities more efficient, more effective. The vote we will be taking in a few minutes is a product of us filing cloture at the end of last week to give focus to the debate.

I stand before you as majority leader to encourage our colleagues to vote for cloture. That means germane amendments will be considered. The amendments that have been introduced, that are pending, that are germane, will still be considered, can still be voted upon. In fact, germane amendments also that are brought to the floor can still be voted upon.

What it does mean is that over the next 30 hours we have a huge task and that task is to bring to closure and ultimately to a vote on this bill. It can be as long as 30 hours of debate but hopefully it will be much less than that. So I urge my colleagues to vote with the managers, with the leadership in the Senate for cloture on this very important bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. I join the majority leader in our enthusiastic support for the vote we will soon cast. I hope colleagues on both sides of the aisle will take this important step. This is an opportunity to make a statement about our determination, on a bipartisan basis, to move this legislation forward.

Senators have come forth with a lot of good ideas. I respect them. I appreciate the quality of the debate that we have had. It has been a very good debate. But now comes a time when I think we need to limit further amendments to those which are very relevant to the legislation, germane, and that is what this vote will do. Three commissions have made recommendations that are reflected in the legislative work that is before us today. Now is our opportunity to build upon that commission work, to build upon what the committee has done so diligently, and to work together to move this legislative vehicle along to accommodate the schedule we have here in the Senate, as well as the recognition that we still have to work with our House counter-

parts to resolve whatever outstanding differences there may be with them.

This is an important vote. I hope, as I say, that we can speak with one voice with regard to completing our work and moving on to the second phase of our 9/11 response, which is the legislative reorganization. I join with the leader and express the hope we can have a resounding vote on cloture this morning.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I will not vote to invoke cloture on the National Intelligence reform bill at this time.

This legislation reforming the intelligence agencies of our Government is a critical step in strengthening our national defense and our homeland security. If this cloture vote succeeds, it will prematurely cut off debate and prevent relevant amendments which could improve this legislation from being considered by the Senate. There are about 57 amendments currently pending before the Senate on this bill and perhaps half will be prevented from even being considered if cloture is invoked.

This is far-reaching and complex legislation which reorganizes the basic elements of our intelligence community. We cannot afford to get it wrong or we will end up making us less secure. We owe it to our constituents and the Nation, if necessary, to stay a few days longer in Washington and finish the job right. Frustrating the right of Senators to offer relevant amendments aimed at improving this legislation is unwise.

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, finally, what to expect over the course of the day. The cloture vote will occur here in a couple of minutes. We strongly encourage votes for cloture. You heard the Democratic leader and myself, and you have heard the managers also make the strong case for cloture.

Immediately, amendments will be considered that are germane. The focus, hopefully, will be on amendments that have been introduced that are germane, so I encourage those proponents to come forward and talk to the managers immediately. The clock does start ticking as soon as this vote is completed. With that, we have a limited amount of time so we need aggressively to start addressing this, amendment by amendment, on the floor.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE REFORM ACT OF 2004

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2845, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2845) to reform the intelligence community and intelligence and intel-

ligence-related activities of the United States Government, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Lautenberg Amendment No. 3767, to specify that the National Intelligence Director shall serve for one or more terms of up to 5 years each.

Kyl Amendment No. 3801, to modify the privacy and civil liberties oversight.

Feinstein Amendment No. 3718, to improve the intelligence functions of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Stevens Amendment No. 3839, to strike section 201, relating to public disclosure of intelligence funding.

Ensign Amendment No. 3819, to require the Secretary of State to increase the number of consular officers, clarify the responsibilities and functions of consular officers, and require the Secretary of Homeland Security to increase the number of border patrol agents and customs enforcement investigators.

Reid (for Schumer) Amendment No. 3887, to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to cover individuals, other than United States persons, who engage in international terrorism without affiliation with an international terrorist group.

Reid (for Schumer) Amendment No. 3888, to establish the United States Homeland Security Signal Corps to ensure proper communications between law enforcement agencies.

Reid (for Schumer) Amendment No. 3889, to establish a National Commission on the United States-Saudi Arabia Relationship.

Reid (for Schumer) Amendment No. 3890, to improve the security of hazardous materials transported by truck.

Reid (for Schumer) Amendment No. 3891, to improve rail security.

Reid (for Schumer) Amendment No. 3892, to strengthen border security.

Reid (for Schumer) Amendment No. 3893, to require inspection of cargo at ports in the United States.

Reid (for Schumer) Amendment No. 3894, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance cybersecurity.

Leahy/Grassley Amendment No. 3945, to require Congressional oversight of translators employed and contracted for by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Reed Amendment No. 3908, to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to award grants to public transportation agencies to improve security.

Reid (for Corzine/Lautenberg) Amendment No. 3849, to protect human health and the environment from the release of hazardous substances by acts of terrorism.

Reid (for Lautenberg) Amendment No. 3782, to require that any Federal funds appropriated to the Department of Homeland Security for grants or other assistance be allocated based strictly on an assessment of risks and vulnerabilities.

Reid (for Lautenberg) Amendment No. 3905, to provide for maritime transportation security.

Reid (for Harkin) Amendment No. 3821, to modify the functions of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board.

Roberts Amendment No. 3739, to ensure the sharing of intelligence information in a manner that promotes all-sources analysis and to assign responsibility for competitive analysis.

Roberts Amendment No. 3750, to clarify the responsibilities of the Directorate of Intelligence of the National Counterterrorism Center for information-sharing and intelligence analysis.

Roberts Amendment No. 3747, to provide the National Intelligence Director with flexible administrative authority with respect to the National Intelligence Authority.

Roberts Amendment No. 3742, to clarify the continuing applicability of section 504 of